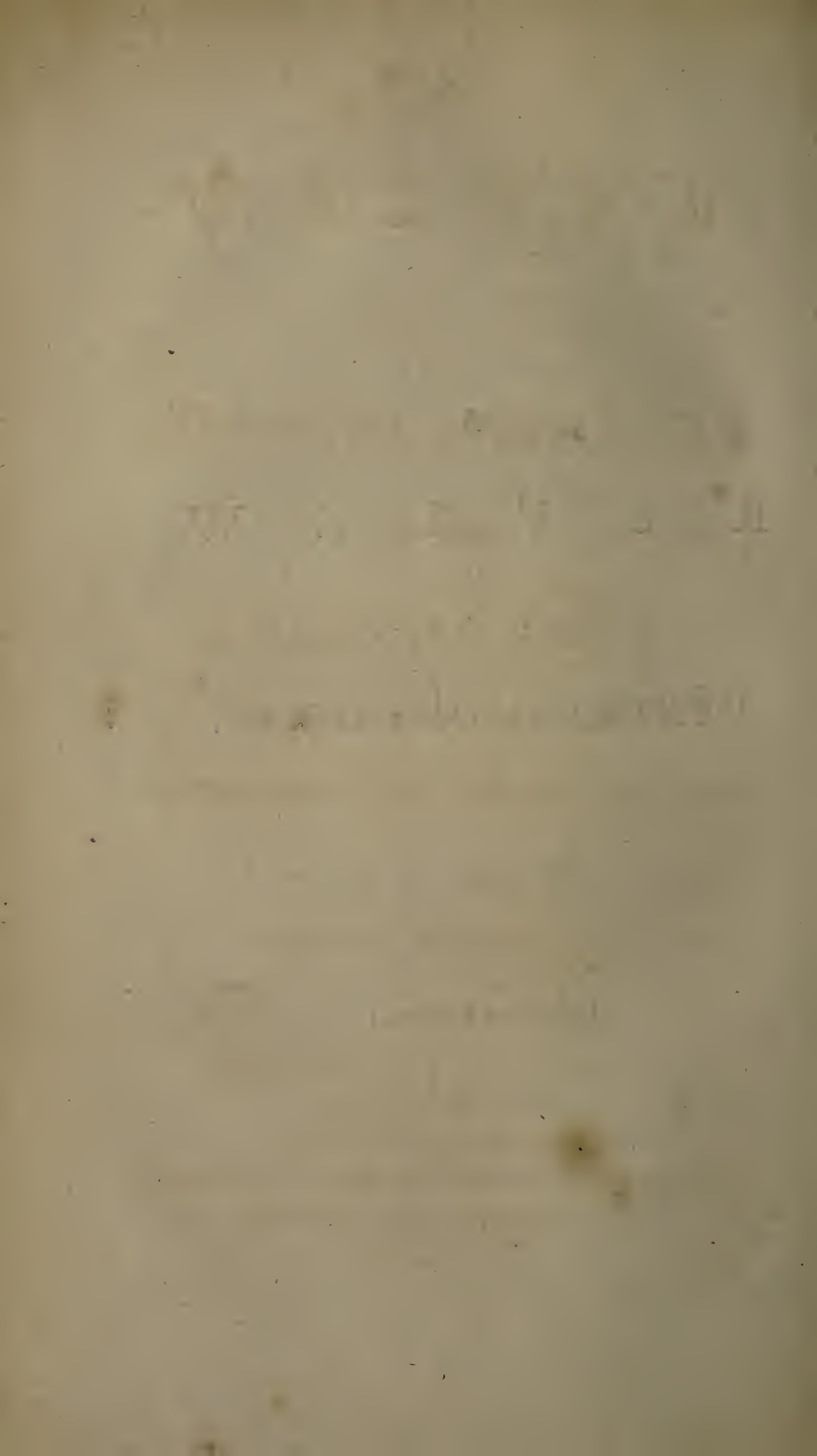


A
R E V I E W
O F T H E
VENEREAL DISEASE, &c.

[Price Two Shillings.]



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A
R E V I E W
O F T H E
V E N E R E A L D I S E A S E,
A N D
I T S R E M E D I E S.

BY WILLIAM FORDYCE, SURGEON.

THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N,

Printed by T. SPILSBURY,

For T. CADELL (Successor to Mr. MILLAR) in the Strand,
and J. PAYNE in Pater-Noster Row,

MDCCLXVIII,

W E I E W

OF THE

VENEREAL DISEASE,

AND

ITS REMEDIES.

BY WILLIAM FORDYCE, M.D.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON,

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TO
SIR WILLIAM DUNCAN BART
THE FOLLOWING REVIEW
IS
WITH THE HIGHEST ESTEEM
FOR HIS MEDICAL TALENTS
AND
THE SINCEREST RESPECT
FOR HIS PERSONAL CHARACTER
INSCRIBED
BY THE AUTHOR.

TO
THE HONORABLE THE LORDS OF THE
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
WITH THE HIGHEST ESTEEM
FOR HIS LORDSHIP'S TALENTS
AND
THE ZEAL WITH WHICH
HE HAS PERFORMED HIS CHARACTER
OF A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
DEDICATED
BY THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS.

	Pag.
INTRODUCTION - - - - -	I
S E C T. I.	
<i>Opinions of the most celebrated writers on this disease - - - - -</i>	3
S E C T. II.	
<i>On the different species of the gonorrhœa -</i>	22
S E C T. III.	
<i>Necessary observations - - - - -</i>	28
S E C T. IV.	
<i>On the cure of the gonorrhœa - - - - -</i>	33
S E C T. V.	
<i>Remarks on the first and second species - -</i>	39
S E C T. VI.	
<i>General remarks - - - - -</i>	41
S E C T. VII.	
<i>Of the swelled testicle - - - - -</i>	43

S E C T.

C O N T E N T S.

Pag.

S E C T. VIII.

Of gleans - - - - - 48

S E C T. IX.

Of bougies - - - - - 54

S E C T. X.

Of buboes - - - - - 57

S E C T. XI.

Of chancrès - - - - - 61

S E C T. XII.

Of other pocky symptoms - - - - - 64

S E C T. XIII.

Necessary remarks on the disease - - - 69

S E C T. XIV.

A problem - - - - - 74

S E C T. XV.

Of mercury and its preparations - - - 75

S E C T. XVI.

On the present state of the pox - - - 94

R E V I E W

OF THE

VENEREAL DISEASE, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

SO much has been written, both by surgeons and physicians, concerning the Venereal Disease, and so much is supposed to be known by every quack, and apothecary's apprentice; about its treatment; that it may be thought presumptuous, or at least superfluous, to say more upon the subject. But nothing certainly can be so effectual an obstruction to

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the progress of knowledge in general, as an opinion that no room is left for farther improvement. Long and large experience has convinced me, that this particular branch does still admit of a great deal; and the dreadful consequences arising from the gross ignorance of many practitioners, as well as from the shameful impositions of not a few, are every day but too apparent. What increases the mischief exceedingly, is the inattention of the patients themselves to their own health, no less than their indifference about the welfare of their posterity. On these accounts, I find myself prompted to communicate my observations on this disease, in hopes of rendering it less destructive to mankind, by enabling each individual, who unhappily labours under it, to judge whether he is in skilful and honest hands, or the contrary.

What-

Whatever deference is due to writers of reputation, in those particular cases, where the rules by them laid down for the management of diseases remain to this day the best standard of practice; that very deference will prove a false guide, if extended to subjects where the lights, which they had acquired, were in reality but the dawn of what is now more fully known. It must therefore be of consequence to guard beginners in the healing art against an implicit reliance even on the greatest professors.

SECTION I.

Opinions of the most celebrated writers on this disease.

DR. Sydenham has justly acquired the highest rank in the profession of physic; and to his capacity, equalled only by his candour, I bow with re-

spect. But that great man, it is very certain, has advanced positions on this point, which do not well agree with our present knowledge of it. According to him, the cure of a clap depends wholly on purging medicines, by which the peccant humour is discharged, or a diversion is made of the natural juices, that might otherwise feed the disease. Any purgative long persevered in, he believes, will be successful, but especially the more drastic kinds; and he particularly recommends a form of that sort to be taken daily, for the first twelve or fourteen days, or more. Nevertheless, so far as I have had opportunities of observing, I must be of opinion, that either in delicate, or irritable habits, nothing tends so directly to keep up the cordee, to bring on strangury and fever, or to produce swelled testicles, as drastic and daily purging. But who would not guard, if possible, against every

every one of these symptoms ? The last in particular, that of swelled testicles, seems to me in its consequences the most formidable that can befall the patient, and the most troublesome to the practitioner ; whether you speak of his reputation which is concerned to prevent, or of the skill which is required to conquer it, and to put a stop to the terrible inroads it makes on the constitution.

To proceed with our admired author ; he does not prescribe bleeding, even in sanguine temperaments, and where the complaint is obstinate, till after a month's purging ; “ left,” says he, “ it should throw “ the disease into the habit.” But now, if, during this purgation for a month, the strangury, continual cordee, watchfulness, or fever, occasioned by so heating a method of cure, even in spite of a severe course of diet ; if these evils, I say, are not alleviated by bleeding, opiates, and
absti-

abstinence from meat, which last he does not require, what are the consequences ? A fever supervenes, by which the flow of the virulent matter from the urethra is stopt, and the disease is blended with the constitution ; or there is produced in the testicles a swelling, of which the resolution is tedious, difficult, and full of danger.

Another position of this celebrated writer is, that purging is every thing here, and that in this disease, if in any, it may be said, “ He cures well who cleanses well.” On such authority, who would not be tempted to trust to purging alone, and even to carry it to the utmost ? How often have I done so, till I was taught better, and emboldened by experience to set aside the authority of even a Sydenham ; by following whom, in this instance, I had the mortification to find my patients declining daily, and
groaning

groaning under a tedious gleet without any relief!

He adds indeed, “ If the method
“ above mentioned does not succeed in
“ stopping the gonorrhœa, it may be
“ done more effectually by a strong
“ purge; or, if that should likewise fail,
“ by two or three doses of turpeth mi-
“ neral at proper intervals, or else by a
“ large dose of calomel twice a week.”

All these however I must in general dis-
approve, as scarcely suited to any but the
most robust constitutions.

After this he has recourse to turpentine
medicines, and the drying balsams; but
without specifying sufficiently when they
may be used with safety, notwithstanding
he seems so well aware of the risk the
patient runs of falling into a confirmed
pox, from the peccant humours not be-
ing properly carried off by purgatives,
in constitutions where there is an anti-
pathy

pathy to these; or a difficulty of being purged.

As to his notion that the hardness in the prepuce, or the ulceration brought upon that part, or under it, is to be cured by fomentations, and mucilaginous or oily applications alone, or even by the mercurial preparation of precipitate mixed with a softening ointment; I must needs say, that I do not find it correspond with fact, having seen poxes often superinduced by this last application; I mean, where the antivenereal course has not been first regularly pursued. In that case, indeed, the method I speak of will soften the præputium, and enable the patient to return it; or the same thing may be effected by the leaden cannula contrived and recommended by Fallopius, to which I have been frequently forced to have recourse, when all the ulcers had disappeared.

With

With regard to the treatment of the swelled testicle; Dr. Sydenham does not give the least hint, that mercurial applications, or preparations, are often necessary to secure the patient from the pocky consequences of inflammation which happen frequently in that tender part.

But to conclude the strictures which justice to my subject has obliged me, however unwilling, to make on this truly great man; the principal objection to his method of treating the confirmed pox is his trusting for the cure to so small a quantity of the quicksilver rubbed on at first to raise a salivation, and his depending on alteratives afterwards given inwardly to keep it up: for I doubt not of being able to demonstrate in the proper place, that the security does not arise from the salivation, so much as from the quantity of quicksilver necessary to extinguish the symptoms.

Dr. Boerhaave, after thirty six years close attention to the venereal disease, acknowledges, that, in a number of cases, he was still uncertain about the best method of treating it; and that the least circumstance mismanaged, or overlooked, was productive of complaints which he could not conquer.

After so candid an acknowledgement, may I not hope to be forgiven by the Boerhaavian school, justly respectable for having bred many who are now among the brightest ornaments of their profession, if I take the liberty to dispute several of that great man's opinions in relation to this disease; since it cannot seem strange, that the experience of thirty six years more, which have elapsed from the time he made the observation above mentioned, should have thrown such light on some particulars, as shews him to have been mistaken on a subject which by his own confession he found so difficult ?

I begin with observing, that his maxim of mercurial medicines being never necessary in his first species of gonorrhœa, does not hold universally, it being certain that the pox has taken place, and been communicated to the wife, after the most regular treatment upon his plan; probably indeed owing to the patient's having contracted this first species from a woman who was poxed.

In his second species of the gonorrhœa, attentive observers must have often seen the disease creep into the inguinal glands, during a course of brisk purging, accompanied with an antiphlogistic regimen, for two whole months, although the running has not received the least check whatsoever.

With respect to his third species, where the complaint affects Cowper's glands of the urethra, he remarks that the success of the cure depends entirely on the whole

of the infectious matter flowing off by means of the discharge ; but he does not specify when mercurials are to be used, though he observes very justly, that the severe remedy of a salivation becomes here often necessary.

To his doctrine concerning the fourth species, where the prostate gland is affected, I should have no objection, as he recommends a salivation at once ; provided he gave any caution about the impropriety of trusting to the purging course mixed with mercurials, by which the effects of mercury on the disease are always weakened ; or provided he described the powers which belong to decoctions of sassa, or balsamic drinks.

As to his fifth and last sort of gonorrhœa, where Morgagni's glands, and the seminal vesicles, &c. are affected, we must necessarily disapprove of his resting the patient's relief from this miserable state
on

on plaisters, ointments, fomentations, poultices, the knife, the sweating box, diet drinks, abstinence, and severe salivations; without recommending, what we have generally found necessary in such a case, the use of mercurial ointment so moderately applied as not to break down the habit, or of Peruvian bark, open air, milk diet, and the soft decoctions.

We come now to his general maxims for the cure of a confirmed pox. This, he tells us, consists in drawing off all the fat of the body, even to the last particle; in which fat, according to his theory, the whole poison of the venereal malady is lodged. “For,” continues he, “if
 “the least particle remains, there is rea-
 “son to fear a relapse; so that, unless
 “the oils of the body, and this poi-
 “son concreted in them, are entirely
 “dissolved, and purged off, you can ne-
 “ver

“ ver (if the disease is inveterate) have a
 “ radical cure, but only the appearance
 “ of one, such as you will repent your
 “ having trusted to, very heartily. Now
 “ the effects here required are to be pro-
 “ duced by mercury; on whose action
 “ however you are not to rely, unless
 “ you reduce all the fat humours into
 “ water, expel them completely, and
 “ with them wash off entirely the ve-
 “ nereal poison.” What is the infer-
 ence? “ That, in order to be properly
 “ cured of the pox, the patient must be
 “ fed on the leanest foods, kept in a
 “ great and continued heat, reduced to
 “ the paleness of a corpse; in a word,
 “ totally emaciated, and the cure pro-
 “ tracted, till he has got rid of all his old
 “ juices. If this counsel is not faithfully
 “ followed in curing him; and if, after
 “ you have cured him, you do not re-
 “ strain him, for a month or two longer,
 “ from

“ from fat things of the putrescent kind;
 “ you will have cause to regret your
 “ having subjected him in vain to the
 “ torture of so severe a course, since there
 “ will be still some relics of the disease
 “ lurking in the body, and buried there
 “ only for a time, to rise again with new
 “ strength and violence.”

On reading, many years ago, the above
 theory of this eminent physiologist, I
 concluded from so high an authority, that
 the disease could not be cured radically
 by any other method, and accordingly set
 about treating the more stubborn cases in
 his way; till I discovered that, notwith-
 standing the firmest adherence to it, there
 frequently remained in the groins such ob-
 stinate and ill looking sores, as were not
 to be healed, till the natural balsam
 of the blood was restored by freer living,
 and a fuller habit. I likewise found,
 that the disease was only hid by this
 low-

lowering plan, and broke out afresh upon the change to a plentiful diet. Neither indeed could it be well expected, that, in a country like this, your patients would submit to be starved, while their companions in the same situation were recovering daily by following a reasonable regimen.

He likewise urges the necessity of the same severe treatment, where the disease lies out of the course of circulation, among the bones, and therefore out of the reach of mercury. In that case, he allows his patient nothing but biscuit and raisins for food, with decoctions of guaiacum for drink; whereas, in our days, even when mercury fails, strong decoctions of sarsaparilla, without confinement or any particular regimen, produce, as we have proved elsewhere, a speedy, safe, and pleasant cure. I have the most evident proofs that small exfoliations, not

extending so far as the futures which mark the boundaries of the small bones of the face, are thrown off by strong decoctions of *sarsa*; though this fact is very positively contradicted by our illustrious author.

The writer on this subject, who, of all that have yet treated it, seems beyond comparison to have understood it best, is Dr. Astruc. If the following short remarks on his work are found justified by facts, the candid reader will, I trust, forgive a freedom, which nothing but those facts could have induced me to take with so able a professor.

His notion that a gonorrhœa never terminates in a pox, provided the matter loaded with the venereal contagion is freely and copiously discharged, tends to prevent the attention that is necessary for eradicating the whole infection; since we see every day, in many obstinate gonorrhœas, the worst consequences arising

D

from

from the least neglect in prosecuting the antivenereal course to its full length.

Nor does he appear to inculcate, with sufficient force, the necessity of employing mercurials, as soon as the double infection is discovered; neither can I find, that, in treating the gonorrhœa, he has determined to what extent they must be used for curing effectually its pocky attendants.

He seems not sufficiently aware of the risk the patient runs of getting poxed by strengthening and astringent medicines. But perhaps the French temperament and climate may make a more material difference in the disease, and the effects of its remedies, than I have had access to observe in this country.

Towards the end of his work, he has given us the history of particular symptoms and relics of this disease, that no plan with which he was acquainted could
remove;

remove; such as certain swellings in the testicles which do not yield to the hydrargyrosis, distortion of the penis, nodes, ganglions, tubercles, exostoses, gummata, cancerous appearances, and old venereal sores, ulcers in the womb, &c. Yet we know assuredly, that all these may be cured by some kinds of mineral waters, strong decoctions of sarfa, and hemlock, outwardly and inwardly applied.

If upon the fairest trials, frequently repeated, I had, in all or in most venereal cases, found success from the solution of corrosive sublimate, formerly used in this country*; ushered in afresh by such a master in medicine as Baron Van Swieten, and supported by his disciples at Vienna, and elsewhere†, with the evidence of innumerable cures registered in their hospitals‡ as performed by it; I should in that

* Turner.

† Medical Essays of London.

‡ Locker.

case have probably saved the world and myself the trouble of these sheets, whereof one main intention is, if possible, to put a stop, in these kingdoms, to the practice of relying on this corrosive medicine for the cure of almost every venereal complaint, however serious, and however much the object of the more momentous and adequate antidote, mercurial ointment.

Whether its failure in my own experience, or under the careful management of many gentlemen in the profession, of my acquaintance, was owing to the nature of our climate, or to the state of the juices occasioned by so much animal food, or to the want of sufficient mercurial momentum in so small a quantity of the medicine as is generally used, I will not take upon me to say: but I am apt to believe, that by continuing to prefer the mercurial ointment to any of the preparations of mercury, I shall be frequently employed

employed to complete, by inunction, that cure which others have attempted unsuccessfully with this now so fashionable medicine; of which I can affirm with certainty, that it failed very often in the British hospitals in Germany, as well as in the Isle of Wight, during the last war; and that it has done infinite mischief in this metropolis, under as many quackish names as there are advertisements in the news papers for the cure of the complaint.

From these few observations on what is advanced by some of the most celebrated writers on this subject, I apprehend it appears, that the characteristics of the venereal disease, the nature of the remedies, and the fittest time of applying them, have not hitherto been generally understood; and therefore it is hoped the present attempt will not be deemed unnecessary. I am sure my end will be gained, if, by communicating information to some,
and

and calling forth the experience of others, in so important a branch of the healing art, I may contribute any thing to the welfare of mankind.

S E C T I O N II.

On the different species of the gonorrhœa.

THE period at which the venereal infection was brought from the West Indies into Europe is sufficiently ascertained, and the rapidity with which, under different shapes, it soon after spread over the rest of the world, is commonly known. Without dwelling on circumstances so little interesting at this time, we will go on to trace the disease from its simplest appearances to its more complicated forms, and endeavour to establish such rules as shall at once determine its peculiar qualities, and point out the remedies, together with the regimen,

men, requisite for the cure of its various stages.

It has been frequently asserted, that the division of the clap and pox into their different species is of little or no use. But if it is not known how far the disease has got into the genitals in the gonorrhœa, or into the habit in the lues venerea, I see not how the indications of cure can be so clearly discovered. If therefore we can make the division in question sufficiently intelligible to a sensible reader, though no anatomist, and, by ascertaining the exact state of the distemper, can explain its proper treatment through its several stages, we shall have the pleasure of contributing to the comfort of every one who wishes to know whether he has obtained a complete cure, or if not, whether he is in the way to it.

A man in perfect health passes, by his urethra, urine and semen only, or perhaps

now

now and then a little of that transparent mucus which lubricates the passage. The parts composing this passage, continued all the way up to the neck of the bladder, are the general seat of the gonorrhœa. If by manustupration, or early venery, he has weakened the feminal organs, he then often passes the seed before it is properly concocted or exalted, which debilitates the whole body, but more particularly the nervous system. This is called *Tabes Dorsalis*; an evil more dreadful in its consequences than the most virulent gonorrhœa, and often producing tremors, palsies, melancholy, and madness. ‘ *Tali*
‘ *tabe laborantes cœlibes vivant, nisi prius*
‘ *hæredes gignendi facultatem experti sint,*
‘ *ne nihil præter nothos et ingentem mise-*
‘ *riam matrimonium sequatur.*” I write as a surgeon, not as a casuist. Of this gonorrhœa we profess not to speak.

The most simple species of gonorrhœa, contracted by infection, is discerned by a discharge from the urethra, marking the linen with an ichorous kind of stain ; in the middle of which there is commonly perceived a yellow or greenish coloured pus, about the size of a pin's head, together with, now and then, a single drop of the same sort lodged in the point of the urethra ; and this attended with a scalding heat in the water, but without cordee, or any other violent symptom.

When, some days after the knowledge of a person infected, there appears an inflammation on the glans penis, with an oozing of matter from behind the nut, from the internal surface of the prepuce, or from the glans penis, but without ulceration, or any discharge from the urethra itself, and, on being touched by the urine, conveying the same sort of

sensation which we call heat of water; this may be styled the second species of gonorrhœa.

When, on pressing the nut at any time, especially in the morning, there issues from the urethra a quantity of purulent matter, which seems to come from the body of the gland, or not farther back than about an inch from the orifice of the urethra; I would call this the third species. As it is the most common sort of any, so it is usually of long continuance.

When a plentiful discharge of matter flows into the whole cavity of the urethra, and is supposed to have affected Cowper's glands, I would term it the fourth species of gonorrhœa.

In the fifth, the matter comes all the way from the neck of the bladder, and in very large quantities, attended
with

with continual difficulty in making water, a fetid smell, and imposthumations outwardly on the perinæum, and ad anum.

If all these symptoms are advanced a stage higher, so as to affect the seminal vesicles, and to produce incontinency of water, or an incapacity of retaining the seed, it has been considered by some authors, as another, and the last species of gonorrhœa.

To me it appears, that this sort, and the two immediately preceding, may be properly considered as pocky appearances, and ought certainly at once to be treated as such, since they will not yield to any medicine merely antiphlogistic.

Having thus described the different species of gonorrhœa, so as to enable any patient of ordinary understanding, to discover with exactness the stage of his distemper, I now proceed to point

out the cure, after premising some observations, partly for the sake of preventing mistakes, and partly for paving the way to what shall follow.

S E C T I O N III.

Necessary observations.

IN the first place, it is but fair to acknowledge, that where there is virulence in the gonorrhœa, our art cannot cure it speedily, and effectually, at the same time. Therefore the patient should not expect, nor the physician promise it. Unless the severest regimen is observed, it will often run out to two or three months, and in some cases to five or six.

In the next place, I must take the liberty to say, that the impropriety of establishing infallible maxims never appeared more evident, than in the principal one which has been so frequently laid down
on

on this subject; namely, that a large and continued running, kept up either by medicines, or by other proper methods, is the greatest preservative against a clap's becoming a confirmed pox; for, if the clap be of a bad sort, it will in many cases become a pox, by trusting to that very running; whereas, by the seasonable interposition of mercury, the cure might be dispatched time enough to avoid so disagreeable an event. There are many people indeed, who, from an apprehension of mercury's producing pernicious effects on the constitution, will scarcely consent to the use of it at all in what they call a clap. It will afterwards appear how ill grounded their fears are on this head. The maxim above mentioned is, I confess, of real use, when it supercedes the necessity of employing astringents or injections, till there has been time given to remove the virulence, or when it prevents

con-

confiding in those whose boasted expeditious methods of treatment are calculated to ruin, not to save.

For my own part, I hold it as a principle, never to use either astringents, injections, or balsamics, but in cases of extremity ; nor even then, till I have, by a course of mercurial inunctions, provided against all the ill consequences of the disease, (supposing it to prove obstinate, and the running to continue discoloured) as well as against any retention of morbid matter, by promoting in every possible way a free discharge for a proper time ; and let me add, not till I have likewise tried, without effect, every method to restore the tone both of the part, and of the habit, in the manner that will be hereafter explained.

To brisk purgatives in this distemper I am utterly averse ; and the gentler ones I am for using more rarely than is commonly

monly practised. In truth, I generally suspect long continued discharges, as tending to produce a pox, or at least obstructions of the urethra, which last are not curable by topical applications alone.

During the whole course of a virulent gonorrhœa, there is danger of its being carried into the habit, by every thing that stops the discharge before the infection is removed. The discharge will be stopt by hurried walks, or violent exercise of any kind, especially on horseback; or by strong and drastic purges, whether common or mercurial, or by catching cold, or a fever fit, while under a purging course.

It deserves particular notice, that every thing promoting erections of the penis increases inflammation, sends the infection further back into the urethra, keeps up the disease, and often subjects the patient to all the inconveniences of a
fresh

fresh antiphlogistic regimen for two or three weeks, in the same manner as if the cure was but just begun. Among the causes of such erections, may be reckoned chiefly a turtle feast*, a fish diet, hearty dinners, onions, spiceries†, high-seasoned foods of every sort, fermented liquors, hot suppers, women's company, and libidinous conversation.

* I have not only often seen the disease recur, with all the symptoms of its first stage, in consequence of a turtle feast; but have once known a running, with inflammation, brought on by the same means, in a sober married man, who had been free from infection for many years: at least I could not trace it to any other source.

† I am informed by a friend lately arrived from the islands of Bourbon, that, having one day put a parcel of the Cayenne pepper in a handkerchief round his waist, his black servant told him, it would give him the clap. He had not seen a woman for eight months before. The prophecy was fulfilled in a day or two; and he found it necessary to be cured in the common way, by the advice of a surgeon there, who said it was a very usual effect of that spice in those islands. I mention this only as matter of curiosity.

If ever a strict attention to regimen is necessary in any disease, it is certainly in this, where the infection is recalled into the habit by every deviation in point of diet, or of exercise.

SECTION IV.

On the cure of the gonorrhœa.

THE generality of authors are agreed, that purging is the remedy for the gonorrhœa; as is salivation for a confirmed pox : but it has not been explained with sufficient exactness; when the first cannot answer, any more than why the last often fails ; nor whence proceeds the inefficacy in the former case, or what resources in both cases are still left.

If the procuring from two to four stools every other day, for the first fourteen days, and the same number every third day during the second fourteen days, does

F

not

not considerably diminish the running, or change the yellow or yellowish-green matter into a discharge more feminal, ropy, and diluted in its colour; I should not hesitate in such a circumstance, even though the cordee or heat of urine were not removed, (and they will sometimes remain as at first) to apply such a preparation of mercury, as I thought safest, and fit to be used in the largest quantity. What that is, will be determined afterwards.

If the form of pills is preferred by the patient to half an ounce or more of salts and manna, (of each equal parts) then from ten to fifteen grains of jalap root, with as much nitre, mixed up into pills of the common size, will probably be a proper quantity for producing the desired effect.

Or, if the form of an electuary is yet more agreeable, the following, which I
would

would call the Elect. Diafenæ, will answer every purpose that is to be obtained by purging.

R. Elect. lenitiv. drach. vi.

Pulv. e tragacanth. comp. unc. fs.

—— fol. fenæ drach. ii.

—— jalap. drach. ifs.

Syrup. rosar. solutiv. q. f. fiat electarium;
cujus capiat q. n. m. majoris alterna vel
tertia nocte, vel pro re nata.

If instead of such a course you purge daily, what is the consequence? You keep up a continual irritation on the bladder, by the tenesmus attending frequent purging, and an inclination to make water, or a stimulus all along the urethra, where the disease first lodges; than which nothing is more likely to prolong the inflammation, or to provoke a gleet. Now all this is prevented by gentle physic, taken every second or third day only.

It is a common practice to be perpetually diluting with large quantities of small drinks, ptisans with nitre, &c. When the pain in making water is not extreme, a moderate quantity of softening liquors, such as milk and water, water gruel, or linseed tea, answers the purpose much better, and flows off with less trouble, and fewer calls on the patient. An attention to this circumstance will, besides preventing much pain, forward the cure not a little.

It is acknowledged, that, in very irritable or spasmodic habits, gum arabic, and syrup of white poppies, are always useful, and sometimes necessary.

As to nitre, and diuretics in general, my objection to them is not answered by their antiphlogistic effects, while the same effects can be produced by diluent and softening drinks, or by bleeding, and abstinence from flesh, and from wine, spirits,

spirits, or fermented liquors of any sort ; and, above all the rest, by repose. By repose, I mean a sedentary life during the cure, or at least slow motion, either on foot, or in an easy carriage, and off the streets.

Wherever pain in erection, or heat of urine, or feverish symptoms, grow to any height, bleeding is the sovereign remedy. In reality, it should be used in all plethoric habits, and in every case where the pain is occasioned by excessive acrimony.

A truss for the scrotum serves, beyond any thing, to keep off inflammation in the spermatic organs. It should be worn from the first appearance of the disease, till it has ceased some weeks.

From what has been said in describing the different species of the gonorrhœa, it will easily be discovered, where the antiphlogistic plan is succeeding, where external applications will be useful, and likewise

wife in what cases recourse must be had to the great specific.

It has been generally believed, that the cure of the clap is best promoted by whatever encourages the discharge, particularly by brisk purgatives repeated daily, or at least frequently. If by such are meant refins of jalap, and scammony, pulp of colocynth, and gamboge, I must disapprove of their use, even though recommended by a Turner, a Sydenham, or a Boerhaave, who believed that the putrid infection was carried off by them most effectually. It seems to me, that they can only be warrantable, if given once or twice a week, and this in robust constitutions; since they always heat the body more or less, hurt the stomach, inflame the blood, and often bring on a strangury or dysury in a great degree, so as to increase the disease by every new dose; or at best they produce the most tedious gleets.

When

When writers talk of fusing the humours by such purgatives, I would ask what they mean. Are the humours fused, when fever is brought on, with great inflammation, swelled testicles, and fizy blood? Are the humours fused, where the running is stopt, and the virulence conveyed into the course of circulation, so as to occasion spurious buboes, and glandular or lymphatic swellings, that are scarcely to be resolved by flannel, mercury, sarfa, or hemlock?

S E C T I O N V.

Remarks on the first and second species.

WHAT has been now offered may be considered as containing general rules for the cure of the gonorrhœa. It may not be amiss to subjoin some particular observations, with respect to the first and second species, as before described;
and

and distinguished ; since they belong most properly to this stage of the distemper, and do not put on the pocky appearances which are often assumed by the rest, and which require on that account a very different management.

In the first, or most simple species of the gonorrhœa, a few doses of salts and manna dissolved in whey, and taken at the interval of two or three days, with quiet and sober living, will in the space of two or three weeks produce a perfect cure. If matters must be hurried, injections may perhaps be used in the first species without much hazard ; there being hardly morbid matter in such quantity as to break in upon the habit. In this case, and in this alone, would I presume to affirm, that mercury can never be necessary.

In the second species, where so considerable a part of the disease is external, fomentations of the emollient kind, and
poul-

poultices of wheat-bread and milk, frequently renewed; are of sensible benefit; if used along with the purgatives, &c. before prescribed, unless where the infection is caught from a pocky patient; as happens frequently; in which case, the great specific becomes absolutely necessary.

S E C T I O N VI.

General remarks.

IN every species of the clap, where there is inflammation, fomentations and poultices are useful, so far as they abate the heat and tension, preserve cleanliness, or promote the discharge.

When the cure is no longer dependent on the antiphlogistic method, Dr. Boerhaave seems to rest too much on their operation.

Milk and water of a proper warmth, in a half-pint stone vessel, in which the penis can be soaked twice or thrice a day, is sufficient for the general purpose of fomentation.

I said before, that any plan of medicine, or any regimen, exclusive of mercury, will not effect what I plead for, the curing speedily the virulent gonorrhœa, where it has been of long standing, or has got far back into the urethra. Instead therefore of exposing the patient, by a severe and tedious purging course, to the hazard of a fever, and its attendants, viz. a checked discharge, and swelled testicles, or perhaps a confirmed pox ; I would propose that, as soon as there is a remission in the heat of water and cordee, the inguina, pudenda, or thighs, should be anointed with mercurial ointment as described below, or the blue or Belloste's pill given twice a week,

con-

consisting of ten grains to a dose, and intermixed with the purging course at proper intervals. The consequence of this treatment will be a speedy amendment of the colour, and abatement of the discharge, as well as of all the symptoms, till they totally cease.

By a judicious combination of the above methods, it is proposed to remedy effectually all the difficulties common in the fourth, fifth, and sixth species of the gonorrhœa.

S E C T I O N VII.

Of the swelled testicle.

THE swelled testicle I mentioned in the first section as a circumstance peculiarly disagreeable. I have already observed, that it is generally produced by daily and repeated drastic purging, by being exposed to cold during the course,

or by living too freely, and taking too much exercise in the first stage of the disease. When I hint at the inflammation brought on in such cases, I would be understood to comprehend not only that affecting the testicle itself, but its appendages, the epididymis, spermatic cord, vasa deferentia, &c. which, without the strictest attention, end in sarcocoele, suppuration, hydrocele, scirrhus, and cancer.

In the inflammatory stage, every one is agreed as to the propriety of bleedings, repeated according to circumstances, and likewise as to the utility of fomentations, with an antiphlogistic regimen of the severest sort; that is, abstinence from meat, and even broths, as well as from all fermented liquors, excepting small beer. Where there is fizy blood, this is still absolutely necessary.

Dr. Sydenham, and many of our best surgeons, talk much of poultices of bean
flower,

flower, litharge with vinegar, &c. But these render the solution of the inflamed part more difficult; and, what is much worse, produce such a scirrhus in the testicle, or its appendages, as is not to be resolved.

Poultices of bread and milk, with linseed flower, white lily roots, fenugreek seed, &c. are better calculated to promote the solution of the disease, by a discharge from the urethra of the obstructing, and perhaps virulent, matter. This is much the readiest way of clearing the testicle perfectly, without which there frequently remains an unconquerable gleet. So long therefore as any hardness continues in the testicle, or in the spermatic vessels, especially in the vas deferens, so long the testicle must be considered as a diseased body, and consequently subject to relapses.

The

The generality of writers have been extremely deficient in not marking, with sufficient accuracy, the mischiefs arising from the least neglect in this particular.

If at any time I find it impracticable to clear the testicle, by the antiphlogistic regimen now pointed out, and extended according to circumstances, I am never satisfied, till I have led the patient through such an antivenereal course, as shall ensure him against any future uneasiness from that quarter.

Besides rubbing mercury on the part (if free from pain) or on the inguina and thighs, I keep the testicle always suspended with a bag truss, and confine the patient to bed, for five or six weeks if necessary, fomenting the part with hemlock, and plying him inwardly with strong decoctions of sarfa, bardana, and extract of hemlock; not forgetting, all the while, to carry the mercurial unctions to their full extent.

I cannot forbear taking notice here of the singular use I have found in hemlock outwardly applied, as well as inwardly given; particularly in the case of B——, whose testicles had been both condemned to the knife. A scirrhoty, accompanying the hydrocele in each, and left by the operation, did still remain, notwithstanding a proper mercurial course, and an ample discharge by the digestion, till dissolved by hemlock.

By such methods I have cured diseased testicles of two or three years standing, even when ulcerated, and where the scirrhus had begun to be affected with pricking and lancing pains.

It is observable, that swellings of long continuance, which occasion the vasa deferentia to be knotted like a string of beads, are of very difficult resolution. Such a state requires a supine posture for the tedious space of six weeks, or perhaps more,

more, as well as a purulent or gleetty discharge from the urethra, besides the resources above named.

Surely then, where copious discharges from the urethra prove so useful, the interrupting them by drying medicines, astringent applications, and injections, cannot fail in many cases to produce irremediable evils.

S E C T I O N VIII.

Of gleets.

THIS is a word in every one's mouth, and made use of by many to cloak their ignorance with regard to the real cause which so often renders the disease obstinate, as well as with relation to the proper method of removing it.

When the running continues beyond three weeks or a month, whether still discoloured, or become clear and ropy, it

it is called a Gleet, and must be attacked with agglutinants, balsamics, and astringents, in every shape.

If the disease is ripe for such medicines, it will stop by the use of some one or other of the class just mentioned, or even by abstaining totally from purging.

If, on the contrary, the matter is not ropy, but continues short like melted tallow; and the infection is still lurking in the part; such medicines will indeed often put a stop to the gleet, as it is called, and produce a confirmed pox. Almost every one knows this to be a fact; but how to prevent the bad effects of such a process, is known only to few.

It frequently happens, that the discharge continues for many months, in spite of every attempt by medicines given inwardly, as well as by injections. This is the great difficulty, and requires a more

particular attention, as it is so common an evil.

To crush it in the bud, I would advise every young surgeon, at his first visits, to inform himself exactly as to the time when the running first began, and whether it was attended with symptoms of cordee, heat of water, &c. or whether it is supposed to have arisen from any former infection reappearing upon exercise, freer living, &c. and if so, to learn every circumstance of that infection, of its duration, and former treatment. He should likewise see the stream in which the urine flows, whether large, small, or scattered, in order to be acquainted with the exact state of the passage; for he may be sure, that old complaints there, lengthened out by the nature of the infection, by the particular habit of body, or by unskilful management, must have more or less affected the urethra, by contracting its diameter, or
filling

filling it with caruncles, which are very sensible to the touch of the bougie, though seldom seen upon dissection, at least as anatomists affirm.

If the discharge has manifestly the appearance of a fresh clap, attended with inflammatory symptoms, it will be time enough to examine the urethra with a bougie, when, although your method of cure may have removed the inflammation, it has yet not carried off the gleet. In that case, it will help to save your own credit, as well as prevent much anxiety to your patient, if you examine whether its obstinacy be occasioned by any local complaint in the urethra. If the bougie passes freely, you will do well to set about the cure by a proper quantity of mercury rubbed on.

This quantity can, I think, be ascertained only by the change brought upon the matter, in respect of its colour or con-

sistence. Where such change does not take place, as will sometimes happen, I rub on three or four ounces, so as scarcely to leave the possibility of a pocky cause remaining.

How many obstinate gleets of two, three, or four years standing, have we seen effectually cured by a mercurial inunction, when almost every other medicine had been tried in vain ! Were we disposed to speculate, we should say, that in these cases an internal chancre had kept up the discharge, and that the discharge had preserved the body in such a state, as not to be greatly hurt by the continuance of the distemper.

Should the seat of the disease, or of the ulcer, lie about the prostate gland, callosities will be felt pretty distinctly near the anus, on the raphé or the perinæum, and generally attended with a stranguery. To determine with precision
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the place where these ulcers or chancres are formed, I know not any such proper method, next to that of using a bougie or a probe bent like a catheter, as desiring the patient, while he is making water, to press all along the urinary canal with his finger, till he comes to that point where the water in passing occasions most pain ; for there probably the carnosities, scars, or strictures, are formed. To this point (after a thorough course of unction on the thighs) direct frictions, gummous, and resinous, or emollient applications outwardly, and bougies inwardly used with judgment and perseverance.

By these means, the passage will in most cases be again cleared, at least to a tolerable degree ; the habit will be rectified, and the gleet dried up.

SECTION IX.

Of bougies.

ABOUT the middle of the sixteenth century, the nature of obstructions in the urethra began to be understood, and treated with success by both regulars and empirics. Of the ingredients whereof bougies were composed we have several formulas in the books of that age, and their utility has been proved in every succeeding period.

Some years ago it was supposed, that an eminent writer on the maladies of the urethra possessed a composition of greater efficacy than any used by other surgeons; and his extraordinary success has been ascribed by the public to the peculiar properties of his bougies. Almost all the present writers contend, that the common bougie is as good as Mr. Daran's. But

I must

I must needs say, that his method of applying them seems much better adapted to the nature of the complaint, than any other generally known. Who in this country, for example, perseveres in their use with such assiduity as that gentleman; besides the slight of hand in introducing them, which he has acquired from having made it the study of his life? What surgeon but himself passes them twice or thrice a day, confines his patients to their couch, visits them at a stated hour, regulates every meal and every cup of drink, increases and diminishes the size of the bougie, changes the application according to circumstances, fixes their operation on the diseased part so nicely, or, by such extensive acquaintance with the principal difficulties of this kind throughout Europe, knows how to remedy them? In short, I cannot help thinking, that Mr. Daran is entitled to superior success

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by superior merit ; at the same time that I acknowledge, he gives the whole a mysterious air, which favours more of quackery than of sound theory, or enlightened practice.

I have not been able to discover why Dr. Astruc prefers the leaden bougies to the common sort, or why he represents the last, of which we all know so much good, as ineffectual.

I cannot leave the article of bougies, without mentioning a case I lately met with, of a kind of impotence arising from a stricture very near the glans penis ; where it occurred to me, that an obstruction so near the point might, on attempting coition, affect the seminal vesicles so sensibly as always to occasion the semen being thrown off, ante vestibulum orci : and so it was in fact ; for, by the use of the bougies, the obstruction was speedily removed. I was told by my patient's
 wife,

wife, that I had been of great service, and that, if her husband had applied to me sooner, he might have been cured long ago. The good woman lies in at this time.

SECTION X.

Of buboes.

MUCH has been written about venereal buboes, enough to confound even those who are not beginners. The following facts concerning them are true, and may I hope be useful to explain the difficulties that occur on this part of the subject.

Buboes appear singly, as well as accompanied with other venereal symptoms. Before they come to maturity, the patient is generally oppressed about the præcordia ; which does not, I think, happen in any degree of comparison, under any

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other

other circumstance of the pox. As soon as the matter flows off, the patient is greatly relieved, though they do not heal without a relapse, (even where they have not appeared, till after the venereal course has been thought complete) unless indeed they are assisted by persevering in that course, or by mercurial alteratives.

The French practice of repelling buboes and purging them off, I have not found to answer, though tried with the utmost care. Rubbing the mercurial ointment on the bubo itself, serves only to repel the disease into the habit, let the quantity rubbed on be ever so proper. Ulcers in the throat, or foul bones, are often the immediate consequence. And here, once for all, I declare loudly against every mercurial application to the diseased or ulcerated part, in every venereal case; till the general habit is thoroughly rectified by a proper course.

If

If the bubo is not from its first appearance attended with considerable pain, its suppuration will advance slowly; and therefore the patient should not wait for it, but immediately set about his cure with mercurials, and suffer the bubo to take its chance: otherwise he may increase his disease by a digestive regimen, and give it time to spread by delaying the use of the specific. The whole should be allowed to ripen, before it is opened. Provided the blood be otherwise in a good state, it will soon heal, and fill up, even if opened only by a longitudinal incision, without torturing the edges with the knife, or destroying them by caustic applications.

If the blood and juices be tainted with a scorbutic, scrophulous, or cancerous quality, the sore will not soon look kindly, whether treated in the way of any outward application, or of any internal

course. In the scorbutic and scrophulous state, antiscorbutics, strengtheners, and open air, will mend the appearances and heal the sores, if a sufficient quantity of mercury has been likewise used. It is in the case of scrophula chiefly, that mercury does most mischief, notwithstanding what the celebrated Ballonius says of its virtues in the struma.

I have never met with any incurable cancerous buboes. They have indeed often gone on for many months; but they have always disappeared, as the habit mended. Of late years at least, opium given inwardly, and preparations of hemlock both outwardly and inwardly administered, have, with the assistance of country air and a heartier diet, hardly ever failed to promote a digestion, and effect a cure in a reasonable time. To say the truth, I have, in many cases where I could give no relief by other means, experienced

perienced such frequent good effects of Storck's hemlock, and aconite medicines, as convince me, that there has been some want of candour in crying them down so strongly without fairer trials. I have, for some years past, given above ten pound weight of the extract of cicuta annually, in which time, it is certain I have both frequently succeeded, and frequently failed. I have failed however seldomer in mending the face of cacoëthic sores, than in any other circumstance.

SECTION XI.

Of chancres.

WHERE there is not venereal virus sufficient to produce any other symptom but a chancre on the præputium, or glans penis, I consider the case as the most simple species of pox, but yet hardly ever, perhaps I should say never, to be

be cured radically, without a mercurial course. A plentiful discharge from the chancre, promoted by emollient and detergent applications, if not of the mercurial kind will, no doubt, forward the cure considerably: but I am forced to differ from Dr. Boerhaave and others, when they suppose the appearance in question to be a local complaint only, and such as may be cured by external applications. Let it be added, that every mercurial application to the chancre itself, whether in the shape of ointment, or of mercury in solutis principiis, as the chemists affect to call it, will for the most part only hide the disease, or drive it to the inguinal and axillary glands, to the tonsils, or even to the bones themselves, unless a complete antivenereal course be pursued; and yet nothing is more common than dressing the chancre with every species of mercurial dressings. Nor is
any

any practice more usual than the putting such a patient on a course of purgatives with mercurials intermixed; which method often produces a running from the urethra, and translates the chancre to its internal surface. No sooner is this effected, than it passes for a gleet only, and the chancre is forgot; turpentine and other balsamics are prescribed, the running stops, and the surgeon, who acts on such a plan, takes his leave. — Observe the consequence: On the first debauch, or violent exercise, the gleet returns; and if the unhappy patient has been again living at large, the running is considered as a fresh infection; at best he is put on a purging course for twenty or thirty days, without any change on the colour of the discharge, or diminution in its quantity; and after six weeks it is referred to a former taint, and the same cruel game is played with the constitution, which with-

out

out the strength of a Hercules, the patience of a Job, and the assistance of a master in the profession, ends in an incurable gleet, or leaves the urethra in a chancrous state, full of strictures and carnosities.

SECTION XII.

Of other pocky symptoms.

AFTER what has been already said on the nature of venereal infection, and the method of treating it in the circumstances above stated, it will generally be understood how to apply the doctrine to all the other appearances of the disease, however multiplied. But let it be still remembered, that the more numerous the marks of infection are, the more necessary it will be to attend to the quality of the constitution, to the
quan-

quantity of mercury requisite, and the regimen adapted to both.

It will naturally be asked here, Does the whole cure then consist in using a proper quantity of mercurial ointment, with a proper attention to those few circumstances? I answer, that, where the body is otherwise in perfect health, it generally does; not else. For example, a man catches the disease after a long sea voyage, or a severe campaign: in this case, though perhaps to outward appearance all looks well, the blood is yet often so much distempered, that the symptoms soon grow untoward, or shew themselves obstinate, and the patient is broke down, before you are aware. Or suppose he has got a clap only; the heat of urine continues beyond the usual period, the erections are frequently intolerable, the cordce remains for weeks together, erosions behind the glans penis make their

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appear-

appearance, and this so equivocal that you can scarce say to what degree the infection is advanced, and neither purging nor mercurials are effectual, so as greatly to perplex the patient, and perhaps not a little to puzzle the physician.

If it happens to be the pox, and the chancres cannot be brought to a kindly discharge, but on the contrary spread and inflame, the bubo will neither suppurate, nor can it be healed; and if the disease by neglect, or by the malignity of the infection, becomes more complicated, and less governable, the usual treatment fails. The same thing takes place, to a greater or less degree, in a scrophulous or cancerous habit, and produces almost insuperable difficulties, unless the patient is fortunate enough to fall into the hands of a man of medical learning, or large experience, who knows how to restore the blood to a balsamic state, and thereby to disentangle the
infection

infection from the habit with efficacy, certainty, and speed.

To promote such a state of the juices, was probably the cause of introducing the use of diet drinks, almost as soon as this malady was known; and in countries where the perspiration is excessive, and the fluids are thin, the contagion was to be carried off by the balsamic or active qualities of those drinks.

It will, I am afraid, be reckoned a kind of heresy to maintain, that the guaiacum is of little or no virtue in the venereal disease. Volumes have been written to extol its powers. Dr. Boerhaave has rendered the name of Hutten immortal, by the manner in which he espouses his method of giving it. True it is, he wrote in Holland, and, it may be generally presumed, with a peculiar eye to Dutch constitutions, or phlegmatic habits, in which this medicine might possi-

bly succeed. Thus much however I can freely affirm, that I have given it, or seen it given, times without number, in almost all the stubborn symptoms of the disorder under consideration, without the least efficacy, unless in habits that were very phlegmatic indeed, or else greatly impoverished, or lastly where it has been combined with the sarsaparilla.

To what I have advanced elsewhere concerning the virtues of sarsaparilla I would only add here, that I have not since the year 1753, when I first gave it in strong decoctions, found any reason to retract the least part of what I then asserted; excepting only in the case of a few cancerous buboes, which will not, I believe, give way on a sudden to any method hitherto discovered, but which, I know, may be gradually subdued, either by fresh air, fuller diet, abstinence from mercurials, or by hemlock applied outwardly,

wardly, or given inwardly, whether with or without opiates. My assertion in the Medical Essays of London, vol. 1st, was, ‘ That every case truly venereal is manageable by mercury, or by sassa combined with mercury.’

As to decoctions of bardana and meze-reon roots, the herbs saponaria, lobelia, &c. which have been cried up by different writers; my experience of their powers has been too small to enable me to pronounce with certainty, but quite sufficient to incline me to speak doubtfully, concerning them.

SECTION XIII.

Necessary remarks on the disease.

THE venereal disease differs from most others in this respect, that it has no perfect crisis, except in its simplest species.

It

It is always in a progressive state, growing worse every hour, and recoiling with double force, if the cure be interrupted by irregularity of any kind, or if you give over the antivenereal regimen before the complaint is fairly conquered.

It differs in its quality from itself, as much as the confluent small pox differs from the most distinct sort.

In its most inflammatory state, the antidote may be applied so injudiciously as to throw it much deeper into the habit, than it would advance in equal time, if left to the treatment usual in other inflammatory diseases.

The constitution is able to throw off a considerable portion of the infectious matter by the urethra in a gonorrhœa, and by the suppuration of a bubo in a confirmed pox, with much more ease than by purging in the clap, or by a mercurial course singly in the pox. In the last however,

as

as we hinted before, such a discharge alone we have never found sufficient, though we have repeatedly made the experiment.

It falls out but rarely, that the disease in our days affects the viscera with such obstructions as it produced at its first appearance, when the gonorrhœa had not yet shewed itself, and the use of mercury was less understood. This indeed I have met with in three or four cases, where the antivenereal plan only had power to remove the evil.

I am informed that the Asiatics cure many dropfies, and obstructed viscera, by anointing the hepatic region with mercurial ointment. The obstructions so cured have been probably owing to a venereal cause. I have failed in two or three instances where the trial was made very faithfully, but where I had no reason to believe that there was any thing venereal in the habit.

Anti-

Antiscorbutic and tonic medicines, particularly the hemlock and bark, must pave the way to the cure of this disorder, if you wish that cure to be expeditious and lasting, in the case of scorbutic or scrophulous constitutions, where venereal complaints are always peculiarly dangerous.

It is a declaration due to truth, that I have not, in any preparation of mercury used by injection, found either a certain preventive, or a certain cure, of any venereal taint, at any season from or before coition to the most complete virulent gonorrhœa, notwithstanding the boasted powers of nostrums which Fallopius, Musitanus, F. Hoffman, and many profound connoisseurs in this metropolis, so confidently recommend.

Certain it is that I have formerly brought a pox on several, by attempting a cure with injections of calomel, mercurial

rial ointment dissolved with the yolk of an egg and injected, mercurial ointment introduced into the urethra, the famed solution of mercury with gum ammoniac, diluted aqua phagædenica, and Van Swieten's aqua antivenerea, &c.

Musitanus goes indeed so far as to affirm, that he has known a thousand claps cured by an injection of calomel. We have seen many obstinate gleets cured by it, at the end of a proper course; but must repeat, that we have brought the pox on several people in the clap, by means of this medicine, when we used it in the beginning of a gonorrhœa virulenta.

F. Hoffman has asserted the same thing with the priest; but neither of their authorities can weigh against daily observation.

S E C T I O N XIV.

A problem.

WHAT pains have not been taken to find out an application, or injection, that will, either ante aut post coïtum, prevent venereal infection? Fallopius, Musitanus, and others, have given us prescriptions, of whose efficacy they seem to entertain no doubt.

To me, I confess, the subtilty of this poison appears too like that of electrical fire to be prevented. It is well for the human race that it can be cured.

I knew a young man, whose blood was obliged to be loaded with mercury in a great quantity by inunction for a pocky taint. As soon as his cure was completed, he lay with a woman who infected every body else, but he escaped. In this case, I suppose, the quantity of mercury in the
habit

habit overbalanced the quantity of disease; and acted as a prophylactic: ‘ mais
 ‘ le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle.’

‘ Forſan hydrargyrum in oleo animali
 ‘ vel vegetabili cocto ſolutum, et virgæ
 ‘ ante coïtum benè inunctum, ad prophylaxin appropinquat.’

S E C T I O N XV.

Of mercury and its preparations.

SOON after the venereal diſtemper had made its appearance in our hemisphere, it was diſcovered, that medicines of the common ſort neither checked its progreſs, nor accompliſhed its cure. Some of the ſymptoms reſembling ſo nearly thoſe obſtinate diſeaſes where mercurial medicines alone had been found effectual, probably led our forefathers to try their efficacy in this, notwithſtanding its ſuppoſed bad qualities, which they

attempted to correct by the addition of other ingredients. The malignity and spread of the disease soon brought it into general use.

Who has not heard of the changeable nature of mercury from a fluid into a solid, from a volatile into a fixed state, from a mild into an acrid quality, and from its own colour into almost all colours? The chemists, or the alchemists, can tell you how all this happens, and lover-like are fondest of what has given them most trouble. To them I refer the curious enquirer, meaning only to lay before my reader a few facts concerning mercury, and its preparations, that may claim some attention from those who have the care of venereal cases.

And first, as to its ores; the virtues of these do not by any means correspond with what has been said of them in most books that treat of venereal diseases.

For

For native cinnabars are, in their effects on the body, either fettered on the one hand by their combination with sulphur, or dangerous on the other by effluvia from the arsenical part of them. I have twice seen a considerable salivation raised by giving native cinnabar inwardly. The mischiefs occasioned by fumigations, where the lungs are weak, or subject to asthmas, hæmorrhages, &c. are well known. The disappointments I have met with from the use of the factitious, or antimonial kinds, both given inwardly, and outwardly applied, correspond exactly with the experience of Dr. Astruc on this head. But I feel very little disposition to try powers which are at best equivocal, where we have certain ones at hand. I mean, that their application represses, or at best only translates the complaints for which they are used, rather than extirpates them.

If quicksilver, when strained through leather, leaves no dregs behind, or distilled
with

with quick-lime comes out in the same quantity as when put into the vessel, it is then fit for every use, whether outwardly applied or inwardly administered, as well as for all the preparations into which chemists have tortured it.

In the course of experiments recorded by English writers, it appears, that large quantities of quicksilver, even to the amount of sixteen pound weight, have been swallowed by one patient, without producing any remarkable phænomena in that case, or indeed in any other; unless when a part of it happened to be dissolved by the saliva, or gastric juices, and thereby lodged for some time in the primæ viæ, where it produced the common effect of increasing the salivary secretions, in proportion to the quantity dissolved, or to the state of the patient's juices at the time of giving it. In these instances it corresponds with mercury dissolved in honey, turpentine, &c. as in the pil.

pil. Barbaroff. de Belloft. pil. mercurial. Pharm. Lond. &c. at the worst producing symptoms very manageable in general, and effects more or less beneficial according to circumstances.

As to the effects of crude mercury in this disease, dissolved with turpentine, or otherwise combined with alexipharmics, diuretics, purgatives, &c. I would not absolutely say, that the pocky infection is always too great for such medicines to take place : but so long as you remain ignorant in what proportion the mercurial medicine has entered the lacteal vessels, and what points it has carried, you cannot tell how to ascertain the dose, or secure the patient against a relapse ; that is, in pocky cases.

The same objection, though not in the same degree, lies against trusting to its effect in plaisters : for, on the first appearance of the disease, much was done by
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them both in their simple and complicated forms, provided they were persevered in long enough to lodge a sufficient quantity.

He must be a man of very little observation indeed, who has not seen the mischiefs arising from mercurial plasters applied to buboes, and other venereal tumours, by sending them back into the habit.

Let us now see what is effected by ointment prepared in the most simple form, or crude mercury rubbed into an ointment with an equal quantity of hogs-lard.

In the virulent gonorrhœa, mercurial ointment having been rubbed on the groins in just proportions, suppose to the quantity of an ounce or more at due intervals (purgative medicines being intermixed at proper distances); the discharge generally changes from a green or yellow colour to one whiter, and more resembling the semen, or to one of a
yellow

yellow tinge in the middle of the speck; or else it becomes more ropy, and less like melted tallow, diminishing at the same time in quantity. But where the gonorrhœa has been of such long standing as to have produced carnosities or strictures in the urethra, no inunction will be sufficient without a local treatment.

When the disease shews itself with pocky symptoms, as chancres, buboes, pustules, &c. and you rub on a due proportion of this ointment, accompanied with a suitable regimen, what are the effects? Sometimes a plentiful spitting, with its attendants, and a cure; sometimes plentiful sweating, and a cure; at other times no sensible evacuation, or change on the body, and yet a cure, equally agreeable and permanent; except in some few cases, which are conquered afterwards by diet drinks, small doses of pil. argent. vivi, or slight mercurial frictions.

I allow that the diminution of the symptoms is not always apparent, however properly the course may have been pursued, and that thirty or even forty drachms of the strong mercurial ointment will not always remove the disease. Continue, in that case, to rub a few times more, and a larger quantity at a time, and what ensues? As if the artillery had not been heavy enough before, by thus increasing its weight you make a breach at last, and the disease is taken by storm; frequently, as was said above, without salivation, sweating, a greater diuresis, or any disagreeable consequence whatever; and generally too without any severity of regimen, even in open air. I would not be understood to mean, that the inunctions are, in this event, to be left off immediately. On the contrary, it should be a general rule to continue them for a shorter or longer time, according to the degree of
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stubbornness which has attended the symptoms ; as it is certain that, without such precaution, there may be a danger of their returning.

In relation to the quantity, hear the opinion of two celebrated judges. “ It is “ difficult,” says Astruc*, “ to assert, à “ priori, what quantity of mercury will, “ in the whole, be necessary to cure this “ distemper completely ; since that de- “ pends upon the age, sex, and tem- “ perament of the patient ; the malig- “ nity, degree, and inveteracy of the “ infection ; the number, use, and im- “ portance of the parts affected. It “ must be judged of à posteriori, from “ the abatement and ceasing of the “ symptoms : but it is found by repeated “ observations, that commonly not less “ than two ounces of the strong mercur-

* Astruc, lib.iv. cap. 7. p. 272. ed. Paris. 1740, 4to.

“ rial ointment is sufficient, and not more
 “ than three or four ounces necessary.”

The other writer, Septalius, who had the care of the great hospital of Broglio at Milan, for forty years together, where by his account he cured of the venereal disease near one thousand patients yearly, says*, “ That for completing one cure
 “ there ought to be used, at repeated
 “ inunctions, three or four ounces of
 “ quicksilver ; and that the infection
 “ should not be carried off by purga-
 “ tives, unless in cases of the utmost
 “ necessity.” It is the advice of this experienced physician†, either not to use mercurials at all, or to use them in a quantity sufficient to ensure success ;
 “ since by too sparing an application of
 “ them the morbid matter is set in mo-
 “ tion ; and the symptoms being only di-
 “ minished, not removed, unless perhaps

* Septalii Animad. lib. vii. § 224 & 231.

† Id. lib. vii. § 218.

“ to the nobler parts, the patient is left,
 “ uncured and disappointed, to drag out
 “ a miserable life.”

I cannot restrain myself from observing here, how fashionable it is become with many to despise old writers, and to depreciate as obsolete every observation, how useful soever in practice, that has not been made in our more enlightened days: but, certainly, he who has established the truest principles of cure deserves the greatest esteem, and the closest attention, at whatever period he wrote.

With regard to the composition of the ointment, I would always recommend equal proportions of lard and quicksilver; the inunction with a drachm or two, at most, being with difficulty rubbed on to dryness, without leaving the thighs too long exposed to the air; as on the other hand a quantity of mercury sufficient to extinguish the infection is not easily rubbed

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bed on, if the proportion of lard to quick-silver be double.

When the patient's skin is easily fretted, the ointment should be prepared with as small a quantity of turpentine as possible; by which means he is saved an eruption of angry pustules, that often obstruct the anointing of those parts where it can be done most completely, namely the thighs, and the inside of them especially.

By the way, one is tempted to smile at the common manner of applying the mercurial ointment, first on the feet, then on the legs, then on the thighs, then on the arms, shoulders, and trunk of the body; as if there were magic in the process, and the doctor were a conjurer. Surely the ointment rubbed upon the thighs, which can be defended from cold in winter by flannel drawers, and in summer by cotton or linen ones, worn during the whole time of the inunction, and
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where it can be applied without any inconvenience, is as well or better calculated to convey the mercury into the blood, though not to keep up the parade of art.

If any considerable quantity of the ointment is prepared at once, it should be stirred up from the bottom of the pot every time it is used, that the whole may be equally strong.

I pretend not to decide whether the lard's becoming attenuated by age is an advantage or no. Septalius touches on these two last particulars.

The following hints deserve the notice of every surgeon, and are not generally known.

Rub a little, suppose less than a drachm at a time, of mercurial ointment upon a chancre, a beginning bubo, or phymosis, and repeat it daily for three or four times; and it will remove the appearance of disease from the part, and drive it into the

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constitution; perhaps upon the bones; probably into the throat, but always from the part. Every mercurial application to a venereal sore, whether chancre or bubo, is equally improper, till you have conquered the infection.

Rub to the quantity of two, three, or four, and some few times more ounces, in proper doses, upon any part of the body, except the part affected; and all the symptoms of the disease, which deserve the name of venereal, will either disappear, and never return, or else be so altered as to give way to diet drinks of farfa, or bardana, or perhaps of the plants *saponaria* and *lobelia*, or the roots of *mezeoreon*.

Again, rub a small quantity of the mercurial ointment on any part of the body, in the case of a scrophulous or scorbutic habit, tainted at the same time with the pox; and, in many instances, it will

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produce a violent salivation, that in spite of all sorts of remedies shall run on for several weeks; the patient shall be much reduced in his strength, wasted in his body, and remain tainted with the disease, notwithstanding the salivation has been so inordinate. Repeat the anointing, and the effect will be the same.

But first correct this scorbutic disposition, then rub on the mercury, proceed to the length above mentioned, at proper intervals, and in proper quantities; and you will generally, even without affecting the mouth, obtain a complete cure. Go beyond this quantity, and, except in a few cases, mercury shall seem to have produced no further effect on the symptoms. Here we may say with truth, that it has done both its best, and its worst: it has saved the constitution from being ruined by the disease, and

it has changed a strong into a weak habit.

Formerly, physicians were exceeding solicitous to raise the salivation to the utmost height, lest they should not be certain of the cure without it. Of late, they have been contented with sweating, or plentiful discharges of urine. Now, many are satisfied if they use a given quantity, whether it affects the salivary glands, or goes off either by perspiration or urine. I am disposed to be of the last number, with this difference, that where there is a little foreness and heat in the gums, I should expect a more speedy cure, than where there is either none at all, or where there is a more copious salivation.

I have sometimes gone so far as to think, that mercury, by producing a sort of fermentation in the juices, without loading too much the salivary glands, or augmenting their secretions considerably,

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was better for the constitution, than when, by greatly tainting the saliva, it produced a putrid diathesis.

Upon the whole, I believe, that purging gently in the inflammatory state, at the intervals already specified, and intermixing crude mercury internally, or applying it externally in just quantities, as soon as the symptoms of inflammation are abated, will cure a clap in all its stages; and that mercurial ointment, used in the proportions above directed, will generally secure the constitution against the further progress of a confirmed pox, or at least enable you to eradicate it by the assistance of other medicines before mentioned.

I hope that delicate patients will not be alarmed at such a method of cure, when I shall have mentioned one fact, viz. that, in the course of twenty years practice, I have not been able to trace any lasting bad effects of mercury on

those who have used even the largest quantities of it, by inunction, in the case of constitutions otherwise healthy. I speak not of scorbutic, scrophulous, cancerous, nor yet of paralytic ones, where family infirmities are most injuriously imputed to mercury.

Compare now the effects of mercurial ointment just described, with those of mercury in ores, but chiefly dissolved with acids; in which I include the turpeths, corrosive sublimate, or the latter dulcified by repeated sublimations, and mercurial precipitates. Of some of these a quarter or half a grain, or even less, and that diluted too, will produce anxieties, tremblings, vomitings, hypercatharses, convulsions, and sometimes death; at best, salivations not to be restrained for weeks, months, or even a longer period; and, what is perhaps yet more to be dreaded, no cure, or not a permanent one, will be accomplished

complished at last, though the salivation be repeated. Yet some or all of these dreadful consequences must be hazarded, because a smaller quantity of mercury in this way is pretended to be sufficient for the cure, and less destructive, as well as more delicate. The last part of the proposition I admit, but the other two I utterly deny.

Were it right to give into theory, on a subject where we have facts sufficient; it might perhaps be said of mercury acidulated in any way you will, that even the salivation, with all its severe attendants, is not your security. Either the sores do not heal, or the symptoms do not disappear, perhaps indeed from the patient's not being able to bear the severity of the salivation, and the repeated effects of the mercury on the stomach or bowels; or finally no cure takes place.

SECTION XVI.

On the present state of the pox.

IT is a question that has been much agitated, whether the disease of which we have been treating, is on the decline or not. I would answer it by asking another question, Is the passion for pleasure on the decline?

In fact, I believe that the disease is growing much more general, while the treatment of it is still shamefully unequal.

There has been an æra in its history, when it became milder. I allude to the first appearance of the gonorrhœa. But too many surgeons daily shut up that avenue to relief, by a variety of injections mercurial, balsamic, and astringent. I leave their patients to bear witness with what woful effects; amongst others, swelled testicles, unhappy wives, and an half rotten posterity.

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Another principal source of the increase of this evil is the general ignorance with regard to the quantity of mercury requisite, and to the manner of applying it, which changes totally the face and quality of the complaint.

A third most material circumstance to be reckoned here is that of the grafts from Africa, and both the Indies ; where, the treatment being still less understood, the disease has been suffered to lay deeper hold, and to produce more stubborn symptoms.

The last cause that I shall mention, but not the least, is the constitution of modern livers ; where love of ease, love of pleasure, continual watching, and anxious gaming, have miserably enervated the posterity of those heroes who fought at Agincourt and Cressy.

THE END.

